DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 215 928 SO 014 004

AUTHOR Rossiter, Margaret W.
TITLE Vocational Guidance for Women, 1910-1940.
PUB DATE 30 Dec 81
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, Joint Session with the Canadian Historical Association (Los Angeles, CA, December, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Choice; *Career Guidance; Career Planning; Careers; Counseling Services; *Employed Women; Employment Potential; Employment Services; *Females; *Feminism; History; Nontraditional Occupations; Publications

ABSTRACT

The kinds of vocational guidance available to women from 1910 to 1940 are discussed in this paper. As the number of women college graduates increased in the 1890s and especially in the first decade of the 20th century, concern also grew for what all these trained women would do to earn a living after they graduated and before they married (if they did). There was a real need to explore and publicize what jobs other than teaching might be available to these women. The start of the field of vocational guidance is attributed to Frank Parsons who opened the first "vocational bureau" in Boston in 1908. In 1909, when Parsons died, an "appointment bureau," the first in the nation for women, was established. From that time on a wide range of services, groups, books, and publications became available to women seeking jobs. Many women made whole careers in the vocational guidance field. For example, so many college graduates were heading for New York City in search of work in 1911 that the New York alumnae associations of nine women's colleges set up the Intercollegiate Bureau of Occupations there to help their graduates find suitable jobs. After World War I the field of vocational guidance flourished, and a series of new books provided a steady flow of information to a voracious audience. The first of these was "Careers for Women" published by Catherine Filene in 1920. Filene as Director of the Intercollegiate Vocational Guidance Association also held many conferences to acquaint women with post-graduate employment possibilities. In addition to describing these many services, publications, and groups, the paper also describes employment advice that women were receiving during this time period. (RM)

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Vocational Guidance for Women, 1910-1940*

Margaret W. Rossiter

SP 014 004

*To be delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, joint session with the Canadian Historical Association, Los Angeles, December 30, 1981.

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Vocational Guidance for Women, 1910-1940*

Margaret W. Rossiter

As the number of women college graduates increased in the 1890s and especially in the first decade of the 20th century, concern also grew for what all these "trained women" would do to earn a living after they graduated and before they married (if they did). Not all would find jobs as schoolteachers, the traditional occupation for unmarried female college graduates then as well as into fairly recent times Nor was it any longer acceptable for them to return home to their family, as many had done in the 1860s and 1870s. Nor would all these women who might be seeking jobs in teaching necessarily be suited to that work. Therefore there was a real need to explore and publicize what other jobs might be open to these "trained women."[1]

The standard history of vocational guidance by John M Brewer, one of its founders, attributes the start of the field to one Frank Parsons of Boston, who with the help of philanthropist Pauline Agassiz Shaw opened the first "vocation bureau" at the Civic Service House in Boston's North End in 1908. Although Parsons died a year later, others published his book Choosing a Vocation ~~a year later,~~ shortly thereafter, and started the National Vocational Guidance Association in 1910. Brewer credits Parsons with founding the field, despite the fact that he also lists numerous books on job selection before 1910, because Parsons was the first to go about the subject scientifically. Vocational guidance was, in fact, only one of the many reforms to which Parsons, trained as an engineer but basically an economist, devoted his life. One obituary described his life as an "attempt to make the world over...into some sort of reflection...of the Kingdom of God."[2] It bothered the founders of the vocational

*To be delivered at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, joint session with the Canadian Historical Association, Los Angeles, Dec 30, 1981

guidance that so many people were badly suited to their jobs and had apparently drifted into them with no forethought or systematic plan. Parsons and others thought that the whole disorderly process could be made much more efficient and scientific to everyone's benefit by means of some applied social science. All that was needed was for some persons to study what jobs were available or would be soon, and more and more information on this was becoming available. One did not have to rely on atypical Horatio Alger success stories to know what jobs were available. Besides these economic researchers, other persons would interview (and later develop tests for) individuals to see what their interests were. They would then advise these clients as to which jobs they fit best. The goal was thus not to liberalize society or shake employers from their prejudices. In vocational guidance the employer is king, and the goal is to help the people to fit his specifications. Behind this philosophy were two basic assumptions, only one of which was true for women. Interests and talents were broadly distributed among the population--a son or daughter need not necessarily do what his father or her mother had done. They might well be very different people. At the same time the many jobs in an expanding agricultural and industrial nation required diverse interests and talents. An optimistic vocational guidance person believed that everybody fit somewhere; it was just a matter of finding out where. If barriers like sex, age, race, or marital status meant that not every job was open to every person who had only the right interests, the vocational expert did not get angry at such discrimination but advised the person to take the most suitable job he or she did fit. Prejudiced employers were a fact of life; one developed tricks for getting around them rather than trying to reform them.[3]

Although the counselor at Parson's Boston bureau saw women clients

at the Women's Educational and Industrial Union and his book had a chapter on industries open to women, these were apparently insufficient to meet the full needs of Boston women. Upon Parsons death in 1909, the Union, which Karen Blair has discussed so ably recently in her book on clubwomen, established its own "appointment bureau," apparently the first in the nation for women, and hired first Laura Drake Gill, formerly dean at Barnard College, and then Florence Jackson to run it. Jackson not only interviewed women seeking work and advised them on what jobs were available but also spoke at many colleges in New England. The WEIU also had a pioneering research bureau, headed in 1907-15 by Susan Kingsbury, Ph.D., then at Simmons College (and who deserves a full biography), which put out a series of vocational pamphlets on such fields as women in probation work, advertizing, publishing, and poultry-making. In 1910 the WEIU also published an anthology, edited by Agnes Perkins of Wellesley College, entitled Vocations for the Trained Woman, Opportunities Other Than Teaching. This work omitted, according to its preface, the obvious alternatives of law, medicine and architecture, and concentrated instead on the less well-known jobs. Its 73 essays included 12 on civic service, ten on agriculture, nine on aspects of social service, eight on literary jobs, seven on domestic science, six each on business, special kinds of teaching, and domestic arts, and three each on scientific work, clerical jobs, and art. Often by women in these fields these essays covered the essentials--the nature of the work, the training needed or desired, the opportunities available, and the compensation to be expected (maximum, minimum, and average).[4]

Meanwhile in 1909 the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, which also had a longstanding interest in the jobs available to female college graduates, had also started its own "Committee on the Voca-

tional Opportunities Other Than Teaching" after Susan Kingsbury and Elizabeth Kemper Adams, Ph.D. had presented papers on the "economic efficiency of college women" at the annual meeting of the ACA. A year later the committee's chair Elizabeth Adams, then a professor of psychology and education at Smith College but soon to devote her time more fully to vocational guidance, reported to the ACA that the colleges should be doing more to acquaint their students with the careers of their alumnae and that the branches of the ACA should be starting bureaus of vocational guidance. In 1911 she held two vocational conferences of appointment bureau representatives, one in New York City and another at Smith. In 1912 she reported on "The Vocational Opportunities of the College of Liberal Arts" to the ACA and in 1913 the committee prepared a whole issue of the ACA Journal on vocational matters. That spring it also published its own volume entitled Vocational Training, A Classified List of Institutions Training Educated Women for Occupations Other Than Teaching, which listed the courses and programs available to women in 24 fields from agriculture to vocational guidance itself and including such new areas as civil service, medical social service, psychological clinics, playground and recreational training, and statistical work.[5]

The importance and value of these pioneering works by Perkins and the ACA are clear if one compares them with the other sources that were available for "trained women" seeking jobs in the early 1910s. Most of these other works were highly moralistic, reminding women that generally they belonged in the home and relying for evidence on what else they might do, not on the pioneers around at the time, but on the U.S. Census. Their logic was generally that only what was already heavily feminized (i.e. teaching or library work) would

be appropriate for younger women as well.[6] Margo Conk's recent excellent piece in Historical Methods Newsletter on the pressure within the Census Bureau to change the entries for those women who were obviously incorrectly reported as doing "men's work" (and for those blacks listed under traditionally white jobs) shows how unduly restrictive this range of suitable occupations could be.[7] By contrast the WEIU and ACA publications did not moralize about women's duty to be housekeepers above all else and put great emphasis, as they said, on urging women into those very (non-traditional) occupations that were not yet full of other women.

So many women college graduates were heading for New York City in search of work that in 1911 the New York alumnae associations of nine women's colleges set up the Intercollegiate Bureau of Occupations there to help their graduates find suitable jobs. This group was headed by Emma Hirth, a Smith College graduate, and its greatest contribution came during World War I when it issued two bulletins in the ACA tradition, Opportunities for War Time Training for Women in New York City. Shortly thereafter most of its staff went to work for the newly established U.S. Employment Service.[8]

After the First World War the field of vocational guidance flourished, and a series of new books provided a steady flow of information to a voracious audience. The first of these was Careers for Women published by Catherine Filene in 1920. (One review noted that now after the war women were to have "careers" rather than the ~~"vocations"~~ "occupations" of yesteryear.) Filene was another remarkable woman who may also merit a biography. The daughter of Lincoln Filene of Filene's department store in Boston and a liberal philanthropist interested in the minimum wage for women, Catherine Filene had been interested in women's jobs even as an undergraduate at Wheaton College in Massachu-

setts. While there she had established in 1917 the Intercollegiate Vocational Guidance Association with delegates from several other colleges. As its director she held two annual conferences on what was being done to acquaint women students with post-graduate employment possibilities. Although she went off to Washington in 1918 to be Mary Anderson's assistant at the then-new Women's Bureau, three more conferences were held at Radcliffe, Cornell, and the University of Pittsburgh. Sensing a great need for reliable information on a variety of positions open to women, Filene then prepared her anthology with 159 essays, usually written by the most prominent women in those fields, as Frances Perkins on the factory inspector, Mabel Daniels on composing music, and Margaret Maltby on the woman physicist. Only nine of the essays were on education (and included five on administrators, two on specalized teaching--the blind and in vocational schools, and one each on elementary school teaching and kindergarten work). Five were on secretarial jobs, including the executive secretary, the private secretary, the public stenographer, the shorthand reporter, and the multigrapher. The four jobs in library work included the medical, ~~and~~ industrial ~~librarian,~~ ~~the~~ and children's ~~librarian and~~ as well as the general librarian. As one can see, she favored specialization.[9]

A second anthology of the 1920s was An Outline of Careers for Women, published in 1928 by Doris Fleischman (Bernays) a former journalist for the New York Times and more recently with her husband a founder of the new field of "public relations." Her book contained 43 essays by women with one each on education, librarianship, and secretarial work. By contrast she had two on engineering and one each on radio, science, motion pictures, and stockbreeding. The proportions were deliberately skewed toward the non-traditional to show

and remind young women that now after getting the vote their occupational opportunities were, as she said in the preface, "unlimited."[10]

Meanwhile in the 1920s two other women, both faculty members at women's colleges who were moving into full-time careers in vocational guidance, prepared more ambitious and more specialized works for particular kinds of women. The first was Elizabeth Kemper Adams of Smith College who prepared her Women Professional Workers of 1921 as a study for the Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston. Her approach was to survey, for example, in a chapter on the "health services other than medicine," the changing kinds of hospital care now available. Making use of sociological and economic studies by professional groups and foundations, she made very perceptive comments on the new needs that were opening up, as for scientific dietitians, medical social workers, psychiatric social workers and the like. She also discussed marriage (pp. 31-4) and noted that continuation in professional work was now increasingly acceptable for married women who were childless and it would probably become more so, as more and more couples needing the second income found ways to work this out. She also advised women to join their professional societies and any women's groups in their field and to show what she called "professional courage," since patterns were still in flux and their example would be important to others. She subsequently went to work for the Girl Scouts of America as their educational secretary.[11]

The other woman specialist of the 1920s was Orie Latham Hatcher, a Virginian who had graduated from Vassar in 1888 and earned a PhD in English literature at the University of Chicago in 1903. She had joined the faculty of Bryn Mawr College and might have stayed there had she not in 1914 founded and become the first president of the Southern Woman's Educational Alliance with headquarters in Richmond,

She thereupon quit her job at Bryn Mawr and devoted the rest of her long and highly successful career to vocational guidance for Southern, especially rural, youth. Her 1927 book Occupations for Women, A Study Made for the Southern Woman's Educational Alliance was in many ways similar to most of the other works of the time in its coverage of occupations, except that all its examples were drawn from the South, especially Richmond and Atlanta. She also reminded readers in her section on the education and training required for a given occupation that one did not have to leave the South to become, for example, an accountant. One could take courses at night in Atlanta or at the University of Richmond or though extension at William and Mary. She also had a lengthy section of "Married Women Who Work." The 1920 census had reported a large increase in such women in all kinds of work. Generally these women ~~did so~~ worked for financial reasons, but many others had non-financial motives. She then listed employers' objections to hiring married women under four categories and rejected them all (social--the home would be destroyed; biological--her health would be impaired; psychological--she would be too independent toward her employer; and economic--two incomes in one family is unfair.) She even thought some mothers might work, as should older women whose children had grown up. In the 1930s and into the 1940s (56 years after graduation from Vassar!) Hatcher was still writing books and chairing sessions on vocational guidance for Southern, ~~esp.~~ rural youth, at ~~White House~~ the White House conferences, including ~~that~~ on vocational guidance in 1932.

These two books also show the division of labor that was underway in vocational guidance in the 1920s. They were not written for the girl seeking work, as Figlene's and Fleischman's books were, but for her vocational counselor, either in the high school or more likely in college. These people were themselves a sizeable market, since the

membership of the National Vocational Guidance Association reached 2,500 in the late 1920s. To supply them with more and more specialized information innumerable studies were written during the 1920s often by professional societies and frequently supported by foundations. Small bureaus and institutes were established to prepare such materials and to put out newsletters or bulletins with even more immediacy. Advising women now required the fulltime services of women economists preparing research studies in addition to the personal accounts of the actual participants (invaluable as they remained for fields where the samples were too small for any statistically meaningful patterns to emerge).

Among the new groups formed in the 1920s, and devoted wholly to women's vocational guidance was the Bureau of Vocational Information of New York City, established in 1919, after most of the staff of the old Intercollegiate Bureau of Occupations went to work for the new U.S. Employment Service. Emma Hirth also headed this bureau, which existed until 1926. It was supported by its "members," mostly women's colleges, and had both a board of seven lady managers and an advisory council of 23 persons (11 women and 12 men) including the presidents of some of these colleges, a few women philanthropists, and some interested men, as Samuel Capen of the American Council on Education and Vernon Kellogg of the National Research Council. Between 1922 and 1926 the Bureau issued a semi-monthly News-Bulletin and prepared and issued the first studies of women in particular fields since Kingsbury's pamphlets for the WEIU in 1911. These included Women in the Law (1920), Opportunities in Statistical Work (1921), and Women in Chemistry (1922), Positions of Responsibility in Department Stores and Other Retail Selling Organizations (192), and Vocations

for Business and Professional Women (192). But for every person who read Emma Hirth's publications or read the BVI's News-Bulletin there must have been many more who read about her publications in newspapers or professional magazines, for the files of the Bureau's Papers at the Schlesinger Library are full of clippings that each of her works generated. She obviously knew how to handle the new "public relations." In 1925 the BVI got a grant for $25,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and would thus have seemed to be thriving, but both it and its newsletter terminated abruptly in 1926, apparently because Emma Hirth left for a job as director of personnel at the much larger YWCA.[13]

Immediately talks began on what was to be done next, but it was not until late 1928 that the wealthy Catherine Filene (now Dodd) launched the new Institute of Women's Professional Relations with a grant of $60,000. This was to be run by Chase Going Woodhouse, formerly of the Bureau of Home Economics at the USDA and of Smith College. The Institute was located first at the Women's College of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and then at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut. Like its predecessor this organization continued the practice of issuing its own books as well as a now quarterly newsletter Women's Work and Education for counselors and the general press. This orgnization continued with the help of Rockfeller, Carnegie and WPA grants into the 1940s, when Woodhouse was elected to Congress from New London.[14]

There was thus a great desire for information on careers for women (married as well as single) in the period before 1940. Vocational guidance for women attracted several very able women authors, editors, and economists. Some like Kingsbury, Adams, Hatcher, Hirth, and Woodhouse made whole careers in this field. It also attracted

some foundation and philanthropic support. Yet since most women of the time continued to go into teaching, it is hard to tell how effective all these works were in their goal of urging women into other kinds of work. Nevertheless it is interesting to see what strategies these experts, the best women of the time in the field, recommended to others. Their advice can tell us a certain amount about the history of work for women between 1910 and 1940 and the politics of it.

What advice did these experts give other women? What did they recommend that these would-be schoolteachers do instead? Generally they recommended that young women head for the newer areas of "women's work," which they took great delight in feretting out. They were so reluctant to admit that there was any realm closed to women that even when they discussed areas that might be termed "men's work" they were optimistic. This was possible because they saw two kinds of "men"s work" and focussed chiefly on the first. These fields would include the law, banking, business and other fields that had an incipient subfield for women. Thus the advisers' tactic here was one of immediate deflection. To paraphrase their advice--"Yes, by all means, go into banking; there is great opportunity there. You may head up the women's section of a larger bank." "Yes, go into corporate law; the larger corporations now have women's departments." Since there was no admission of any barriers (except to note in passing that the promotions went more readily to men than to women), there was no forthright discussion of how to avoid or surmount such obstacles. (In a sense the whole genre of vocational guidance was oriented more to initial placements than to advancement or the lack thereof.)

In those other areas of "men's work" that did not yet have a separate niche for women, as forestry, chemistry, and engineering,

the chief advice (at least into the 1920s) was to become an "exception." The situation was both hopeless (or at least uncharted) and yet still fluid, so that an "exceptional" woman might just blaze new paths that others might follow. For example, one of the essays in the 1910 volume edited by Agnes Perkins for the Boston WEIU was on forestry by Mira Lloyd Dock, then a member of the Pennsylvania State Forestry Reservation Commission. But her papers at the Library of Congress show that in previous years she had tried to play a more active role in the field, as by going to forestry school or by holding an actual job in the field, from both of which she had been politely but firmly rebuffed. Thus her views, even in this volume whose subtitle was "opportunities" for women other than teaching, were generally negative. However after listing numerous objections to women's working in the field (they lacked the physical strength to fight forest fires, they did not hold police powers, they could not manage woodland employees or supervise roadbuilding, lumbering, or sawmills), she concluded:

> In presenting an adverse recommendation of forestry as a profession for women, the writer has in view women who must either look first to remuneration for their work, or to employment first with remuneration as a secondary object, and it cannot be stated too clearly that at present [her italics] there seems to be no opening of either kind for women in forestry. There is a tendency on the part of many uninformed persons to suggest to women of uncertain health and defective education, unable to cope with the requirements of any profession, that they "take up forestry, it would be so pleasant to live out of doors." Such advice partakes of the nature of an hallucination.
>
> While the writer offers the above advice, she is well aware that at this very hour there may be some woman qualifying herself in all branches of forestry for its full practice who will display such initiative and such resourcefulness that her name will rank in forestal history along with those of Hartig, Bremontier, and Brandis. The exceptional woman has never required advice, and creates her own opportunity.[15]

(In fact Eloise Gerry with degrees in botany from Radcliffe College just in 1910 joined the Forest Products Research Laboratory in

Madison, Wisconsin, chiefly because there were no men available in "wood science." Though forestry would soon have many other such laboratory jobs, few of them would ever go to women.)[16]

By the 1920s a rather different situation faced women in chemistry. A sexual division of labor had been established in this field as early as the 1880s and 1890s, whereby men did "chemistry" (i.e. industrial or academic chemistry) and women did "home economics"[17] This pattern had prevailed for several decades thereafter, but World War I with its sudden need for trained chemists had opened industrial jobs to women for the first time. After the war some women had turned over their jobs to returning veterans (and other men fresh from college), but enough remained in such positions to create something of a crisis both for them and for other women who sought to enter the field. The Bureau of Vocational Information of New York City responded with a study published in 1922 on Women in Chemistry, which is quite unlike any other vocational guidance I have read. It agrees that there are too many women in the field, untrained ones that is. Employers were thus justified in saying that some women were unsuited for the work, but not all. It was thus up to the women in the field to prove that they were as well trained and as responsible in their attitudes as the (best?) men. Their qualifications should be stronger than those of most men in the field in order to prove to these hostile employers that they were "equal." Women should also show stoicism and personal modesty, even if they received less than equal pay or were passed over for promotions. They might thus be accepted as "one of the boys;" otherwise they might be considered "difficult" and thus make it harder for other women to enter the field. They were all there on suffrance and so had to be extra-good to be accepted at all.[18] Employers reasoned according to the following syllogism, to paraphrase

much of this literature: —loaded deck—

> If one woman [chemist] was irresponsible, unstable, incompetent in any way, one was justified in concluding that they all were. [then one employer]
> If, however, one was brilliant, outstanding and responsible in all ways, one did not conclude (equally fallaciously) that they all were. No, one concluded that she was an "exception."

Thus the ambitious woman professional should always strive to be such an exception. In time this might change the stereotype of women's being poor risks in "men's work."

By the 1930s, however, women chemists were no longer being hired for such competitive jobs with men. Regardless of her training and attitude, women would not be hired for laboratory positions. Thus the advice of the 1930s was not to struggle to measure up and compete successfully to defy sexual stereotypes, but instead to be versatile and follow the sexual stereotypes. One should become a "chemical secretary," or "chemical librarian" or "cosmetic chemist." One might even leave the field and become a home economist, or bacteriologist or go into biochemistry where one might be accepted as a " research associate." Many of these jobs had not existed in the 1920s and were the result of certain consolidations of small chemical companies into the giants that still dominate the industry. Because in such bureaucracies secretaries were needed and were women, and women accepted in these jobs and central chemical libraries existed and many women were trained librarians, these new "hybrid" jobs would take women with degrees in chemistry. The standard advice of the time was that a woman was still a chemist even if she was a "chemical secretary." Some women accepted this advice more readily than others. The phenomenon must have been more widespread than just this one industry, however, for in general the depression did bring us the college-graduate secretary, and college appointment bureaus reported a steady demand for such persons in the 1930s.[19] Thus As "men's work"

became increasingly bureaucratized in the 1930s (a phenomenon related to size of the company), it contained more and more jobs for which women might be accepted. They now "fit" certain jobs and did not therefore have to try to be "exceptions" any longer. There were now manly jobs for men (professional and managerial) and womanly jobs for women (clerical and custodial).

To a certain extent this advice on how to deal with "men's work" in the 1920s and 1930s was also valid for areas of "women's work." In the 1920s the goal was to get better training so that one could be more specialized than other, more typical women. In the 1930s when this great faith in the value of training was severely shaken and one might be unemployed even if well trained and highly specialized, the new message was versatility. Both were possible because what was termed "women's work" was first expanding and then shifting with some new technologies.

One of the best areas for women in both the 1920s and 1930s was social work, esp. specialized branches of it. Of her 159 essays on careers for women in 1920, Catherine Filene had included 21 on various kinds of social work. To a certain extent this much opportunity reflects an expansion of the role of the hospital, most of whose employees were women--dietitians, medical social workers, psychiatric social workers, were all fairly recent jobs for women. So too outside the hospital the 1920s brought us the public health nurse + dental hygenist (who helped prevent tooth decay rather than wait for the toothache which only the dentist could fix) and the medical records librarian. The lab technician or city bacteriologist could also be a woman, as health care became a bureaucracy and concepts of public health expanded.

Similarly home economics expanded greatly in the 1920s and 1930s, both at the university, where federal and state finaincial support created whole "schools" and even "colleges" with a woman dean, and in

business where the field of consumer appliances created a demand for women advisers. One 1930 booklet on What Can a Woman Do With Home Economics Training? by the School of Home Ecomonics at Oregon State Agricultural College recommended 13 areas for such women, including home economics journalism and broadcasting, personnel work, extension work, buying and selling, other promotion, fashion advisory work research (esp. for the government) as well as teaching and one's own homemaking.[20]

In the 1930s, however, a sense of desperation began to creep into a lot of the vocational guidance for women. In 1933 sex segregation increased and Houghton Mifflin Co. urged Catherine Filene (now Shouse) to put out a new edition of her book, and her coverage there shows some of the changes taking place. She totally dropped jobs for women in accounting, architecture, finance, insurance, religious work and three sciences; she reduced the number of those described in advertizing, agriculture, dramatics, home economics, law, libraries, literary work, music, personnel work, and ~~secretarial ork~~ (strangely) secretarial work, social work and vocational guidance. She greatly increased the coverage of women in business, from 8 articles in 1920 to 26 in 1934 and of those in retail or department stores from one to ten. The field of politics also jumped from one to nine, and arts and crafts from ten to twenty. She also added the fields of engineering (3), radio (6), and transportation (4), including the air hostess and the travel bureau director.[21] ¶One frequent recommendation when all else had failed was to try to make your hobby into an occupation. Did you have a "way" with animals? Then think about a job in a zoo, where credentials were apparently not yet required. Did you like to visit museums? Then volunteer to be a guide there; in time you might be able to get a

paid staff positinn there. This advice seams to be giving up on the value of training and perhaps even of sex-stereotyping and recommending that one scramble as best she could for the few odd available jobs in the nooks and crannies of the employment world, outside the big fields with all their requirements and prejudices.[22]

In fact, this advice--to scramble and be innovative--was typical of the advice offered to married women in both the 1920s and the 1930s. Although the attitude toward such women's working changed markedly in these decades, from mild tolerance to stern disapproval, the advice to those who either wanted to work or had to was chiefly to look for part-time work, as in nursing or library work, private school teaching and selling in a department store, where married women were on occasion actually preferred. One could also start her own business, as a travel agency, a gift shop or a rental library. Candy shops could be very successful. If one were no longer married but widowed, she might consider a job at a residential hotel for women or at a woman's club. Often they hired such women as either executives or hostesses and provided room and board.[23]

The 1930s also brought the first glimmerings of vocational guidance for Negroes or black women. Although Orie Latham Hatcher had not mentioned Negroes in the 1927 book on jobs for Southern women, during the 1930s the National Urban League, the National Youth Administration, and the U.S. Office of Education began to publish vocational guidance for them. This reveals that about employed black half of the women college graduates to date were schoolteachers with only a sprinkling in other fields of social work, librarianship and nursing. The future demand for for such educated black women would be in these same fields, since most ~~of the~~ black teachers were only high school graduates (if even that). Of course her salary would be pitifully low, but that would be true in any field ~~she~~

would adcept her. If she earned a masters degree, she would be eligible for a job as head of the department of home economics (or education) at a black college, regardless of her actual field. There was little point in her getting any further education, for she would not be able to use it in any other job, except perhaps as a laboratory technician in a white hospital. Thus unlike white women who were being urged out of schoolteaching, that work promised to absorb most educated black women into the foreseeable future.[24]

Although most of what I have talked about so far is the economic side of vocational guidance, there was also a psychological testing dimension that underwent great development between 1910 and 1940. One has only to compare Hugo Münsterberg's prejudiced moralizing in his 1912 essay in Vocation and Learning with the Strong Vocational Interest Black of the early 1940s, which at least looks scientific, to see that something had changed. In a way this "vocational counseling" or "counseling psychology," as psychologists call it, and the "occupational information" are independent and in a way interrelated. During the 1920s student counseling, esp. of college students and applicants, became an applied field practiced by "counselors" and "deans of women," if not real psychologists. It developed a host of admission tests and achievement scores that were to help monitor the student's course through college. Meanwhile another kind of applied psychology was also developing in business and personnel offices. This was industrial psychology, whose chief goal was to devise tests by which to select, for example, successful salesmen. In this work one picked a large group of successful workers, tested them enough to find statistically significant scores, and then applied the test to applicants for positions as salespersons.[25] Frank Parsons, the

founder of vocational guidance, would have approved, but were such tests valid for women? Barely, if at all, as Even E. K. Strong, in reviewing his own and others' work on such interest test development, admitted in 1943. ~~that~~ There were conflicting results in women's occupational profiles and ~~that~~ much more research was needed.

There seem to have been two basic problems facing such makers of interest tests for women. One was finding and determining the proper "criterion groups" or 400-500 women about ages 30-40 already in that occupation. By 1943 Strong and others had found 39 such occupations for men but only 18 for women (with eleven of each open to both sexes. Thus there were 28 occupations for which only men were tested (accountant, architect, chemist, engineer, forest service, policeman, etc) and seven for which only women were eligible (elementary teacher, housewife, librarian, nurse social worker, stenographer/secretary, and high school teacher of English). The eleven for which both sexes were tested included artist, author, dentist, lawyer, insurance salesperson, office worker, physician, and YM(W)CA secretary.) Strong planned to add seven more women's occupations in the near future--buyer of merchandise, dietitian, laboratory technician, occupational therapist, psychologist, saleslady of ready-to-wear, and high school teacher of home economics. Thus for statistical reasons the "criterion groups" had in general to be limited to the most sex-segregated occupations. This process seems laden with the same logical problems encountered earlier when some advisers limited women to those occupations that already had large numbers of women in the U.S Census.[26]

The second problem facing such testers had to do with the interest profiles once compiled. Often Strong and others could get no clear profile of interests from even these "criterion groups." Women

had such a narrow range of occupations open to them and such easy entry into most of them (as almost any woman college graduate could become a schoolteacher) that the women in a given occupation at a given time showed a much wider range of interests than did men in a single group. Among nurses for instance, many women tested the same as librarians or math teachers or physicians. (Black women nurses however (the only group of Negroes studied in any occupation) were very consistent.) gave a sharp inverse profile. Thus testmaking for women's occupations was very frustrating--to get a large enough sample to test one was generally limited to the most common occupations where parsonalities were poorly differentiated.[27] Nevertheless the tests seem to have been widely administered in the high schools and colleges after the 1930s.

Had all those volumes by the WEIU, ACA. Filene, Bernays, however limited in their own way, and all the rest, come to naught? Had all the advice on jobs "other than teaching" that one might have been nullified by the legions of testers who limited women's potential occupations to either seven (or eighteen) jobs? Were all the atypical jobs to be ignored? The answer was apparently yes, although the culprits may not have been the testers so much as the economy itself.

It may be appropriate to end this paper with a report on a study published in 1940 by Grace Zorbaugh, the dean of women at Ohio State University, and Frederic Kuder of the University of Chicago on the career choices of women students at OSU. She asked over 2,000 women students (97% white, 2 1/4% black) in 1935 and in 1937 a series of questions: Had they reached a decision about their future occupation? 75% said yes, including 88% of the seniors. Had those who had decided used any vocational literature or gotten any vocational advice?

84% said yes, either in high school or from the dean of women's office. What was that occupation? schoolteaching by a wide margin (51.2% in 1935 and 45.7% in 1937) followed by social work (10.3%) and home economics (8.0%) in 1935 and by nursing (9.1%) and home economics (8.7%) in 1937. Did, she asked, this fit their preference? No, answered 10%, over half of whom were enrolled in the College of Education. What would they have preferred (Kuder was famous for his Kuder Preference Test)? A variety of fields but mostly music and art (27%), medical work (18%), and journalism (13%). Thus vocational guidance had achieved only a partial victory. The women were not, the dean was proud to note, drifting into occupations; they were making deliberate choices,[28] However three decades of vocational guidance had not broadened the range of occupations such "trained women" were choosing. Nor was Parsons' assumption that every interest could be matched to a job valid after all. If that were true America would be a much more musical and artistic place than it was. The match was incomplete and there were going to be many misfits, after all, and more during a depression than otherwise. Thus despite three decades of seeking out and publicizing "vocations other than teaching" for the "trained woman," little had changed for them by 1940.

NOTES

1. Joyce Antler, "'After College, What?': New Graduates and the Family Claim," American Quarterly 32(1980), pp 409-34 discusses the postgraduate activities of the Wellesley College class of 1897.

2. Percy W. Bidwell, "Frank Parsons," Dictionary of American Biography, vol 14 (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1934), p. 266; John M. Brewer, The History of ~~the~~ Vocational Guidance, Origins and Early Development (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942), ch. 5; Frank Parsons, Ph.D. Choosing a Vocation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1909); Geoffrey Blodgett, "Pauline Agassiz Shaw," Notable American Women, vol. 3(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 278-80; Willa Norris, "The History and Development of the National Vocational Guidance Association," Ed.D. dissertation, George Washington University School of Education, 1954.

3. This "realistic" view of job selection has persisted into recent times (Ruth Barry and Beverly Wolf, An Epitaph for Vocational Guidance, Myths, Actualities, Implications [New York: Teachers College Press, 1962]).

4. John Brewer, p. 82; Parsons, ch. 8; Karen Blair, The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914 (New York: Holmes & Meier Pub. Co., 1980), ch. 5; Cornelia J. Cannon, The History of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, A Civic Laboratory, 1877-1927 (Boston: private, [1927]), pp. 15-16; Mildred Fairchild Woodbury, "Susan Kingsbury," Notable American Women, vol. 2, pp. 335-36; Women's Educational and Industrial Union Bulletin, Vocation Series, nos. 1, 2, 4 and 5 (all 1911); Agnes Perkins, ed. Vocations for the Trained Woman, Opportunities Other Than Teaching (New York: Longmans,

Green, and Co., 1910). Its preface states that it was based upon an English model, The Finger Post, A Guide to the Professions and Occupations of Educated Women (n.d.).

5. Marion Talbot and Lois Kimball Mathews Rosenberry, The History of the American Association of University Women, 1881-1931 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931), ch. 17 ("The Association and New Vocations for Women"); Elizabeth K. Adams, "The Vocational Opportunities of the College of Liberal Arts," J. of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, vol. 5, no. 3(April 1912), pp. 256-66; whole issue, vol. 6, no. 3(April 1913); Vocational Training, A Classified List of Institutions Training Educated Women for Occupations Other Than Teaching, ssued as ACA Bulletin No. 1(April 1913), contain a short historical preface; see also Roberta Frankfort, Collegiate Women, Domesticity and Careeer in Turn-of-the-Century America (New York: N.Y.U. Press, 1977)

6. The most I've seen were generally the earliest, as William Drysdale, Helps for Ambitious Girls (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1900) and Hugo Münsterberg, Vocation and Learning (St. Louis: People's University, 1912). Standards rose quickly thereafter and Mary A. Laselle and Katherine E. Wiley, Vocations for Girls (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913) and E. W. Weaver, Vocations for Girls (New York: A. S. Barnes Co., 1913) had much more definite, factual information. The last even told readers that "Although only 47 groups of the 303 occupations listd in the census of 1900 include more than 5,000 women workers, still there are some women engaged in all but nine of these 303 kinds of work. This is the wide field of work from which a girl may choose." (p.2) Even Weaver, however, then restricted himself to the most popular fields for women.

7. Margo A. Conk, "Accuracy, efficiency and bias: The Interpretation

of Women's Work in the U.S. Census of Occupations, 1890-1940," Historical Methods 14(1981), pp. 65-72.

8. Obituary of Emma Hirth, New York Times, May 19, 1951, p. 31; Opportunities for War Time Training for Women in New York City in the Summer of 1918 (New York: Clearing House for War Time Training for Women, 1918) and Opportunities for War Time Training in New York City, 1918-1919 (New York: Clearing House for War Time Training for Women, 1918); "Introducing the News-Bulletin," News-Bulletin of the Bureau of Vocational Information, vol. 1 no. 1(Oct. 1, 1922), pp. 1 and 4.

9 Catherine Fielens, ed., Careers for Women (Boston: Houhgton Mifflin Co., 1920); unsigned review in The Woman Citizen vol. 5 (Feb. 12, 1921)p. 988; Filene, later Shouse, was interviewed in the New York Times, Sept. 26, 1971, p. 80; "Lincoln Filene," Natinal Cyclopedia of American Biography 45(1962), pp. 421-22; "Intercollegiate Conference on Vocational Opportunities for Women, Abstracts of Addresses Delivered at the Second Conference Held March 7-8 [1918] at Norton, Mass.," Education 38(1918), pp. 557-77 included addresses by Emilie Hutchinson and Julia Lathrop, the latter on "Opportunities for Women in Government Service," pp. 573-76, which must have attracted Filene herself.

10. Doris E. Fleischman [Bernays], comp. and ed., An Outline of Careers for Women, A Practical Guide to Achievement (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 1928 and 1931) Her correspondence about the volume is included in the Edward Bernays Papers at the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, but restricted.

11. Adams in Who's Who in America, vol. 16(1930-31), p. 149; Elizabeth K. Adams, Women Professional Workers, A Study Made for the Women's Educational and Industrial Union (New York: Macmillan

Co., 1930; reprint of Boston: WEIU, 1921). In the 1920s the Girl Scouts of America also put out a book on careers, though Adams seems not to have been involved: Helen Ferris and Virginia Moore, Girls Who Did, Stories of Real Girls and Their Careers (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1926), which included an interview with Margaret Maltby, physicist.

12. Hatcher: Who's Who in America, vol. 24(1946-47), p. 1018; O. Latham Hatcher, Ph.D , ed., Occupations for Women, A Study Made for the Southern Woman's Educational Alliance (Richmond and Atlanta: Southern Woman's Educational Alliance, 1927). Vocational Guidance, Report of the Subcommittee on Vocational Guicance, White House Conference on Child Health and Protection (New York: The Century Co., 1932) is most notable for its useful bibliographies, including some items on Negroes.

13. The best source is the BVI's own News-Bulletin, 4 vols, 1922-26. See also obituary of Emma Hirth, NYT, May 10, 1951, p 31 and Robert M. Lester, A Thirty Year Catalog of Grants, Showing Recipients and Totals of Grants Made by Carnegie Corporation of New York, During the Period, November 10, 1911 to September 30, 1941 (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1942), p. 117.

14. Isabel Turlington, "Careers for College Girls," Woman's Journal 14(March 1929), pp 15 and 43-44; "Institute of Women's Professional Relations," Journal of Home Economics 21(1929), pp. 122-23; Women's Work and Education, 1929-46; Woodhouse in Hope Chamberlain, A Minority of Members, Women in the U.S Congress (New York: Praeger Pub., 1973), pp. 188-91, and Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (GPO, 1971), p. 1954. The IWPR's papers are also at the Schlesinger Library,

Radcliffe College.

15. Mira Lloyd Dock, "The Profession of Forestry," in Agnes Perkins, ed., pp. 166-67. For evidence that little has changed in this field since 1910, see Susan Whisnant, "Attitudes Faced by Female Foresters," Journal of Forestry 74(1976), p. 762 and Richard Pardo, "Can a Woman Be a Forester?" American Forests 84(September 1978), pp. 22-25.

16. Lida W. McBeath, "A Woman of Forest Science, Eloise Gerry," Journal of Forest History 22(1978), pp. 128-35.

17. Margaret Rossiter, "'Women's Work" in Science, 1880-1910," ~~Isis~~ Isis 71(1980), 381-98..

18. Bureau of Vocational Information, Women in Chemistry, passim

19. E.g. Florence E. Wall, "Vocations in Chemistry," Journal of Chemical Education 11(1934), pp 96-100; Florence E Wall, "Training in Chemistry for the Cosmetic Industry," ibid . 13(1936), 432-36; entire issue ibid 16(Dec. 1939). On secretaries in general, see "Trends in Occupations for Women," Occupations 16(1937) pp 174-77 and Isabel K. Wallace, "A Vocational Follow-Up of College Women," ibid 16(1938), 538-41.

20. Zelta Feike Rodenwold, What Can A Woman Do With Home Economics Training (Corvallis: Orgeon State Agricultural College, [1930]).

21. Catherine Filene, ed., Careers for Women, New Ideas, New Methods, New Opportunities--to Fit a New World (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934; revised and enlarged edition).

22. Dorothy Thomas, "Exploring the Museum Field," Independent Woman 12(July 1933), pp. 238-9 and 2600 see also discussion of museum jobs in Institute for Women's Professional Relations, "Proceedings of the Conference on Women's Work. .1935," (mimeo, 1935), pp. 141-44. The classic, for sheer anger and des-

peration was Walter B. Pitkin, New Careers for Youth, Today's Job Outlook for Men and Women from Seventeen to Thirty-Two (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1934).

23. Miriam Simons Leuck, Fields of Work for Women (New York: D. Appleton and Co , 1929 and/3rd ed., 1938) ch. 18 ("If You Marry"). Her preface to the third edition was one for the few changes she made, There she said, "In the face of the recent sentiment against the employment of women, combined with their greater need to earn under difficult economic conditions, the proper choice of a profession and adequate training therefor have become more important to girls than ever." D. Appleton-Century Co.,

24. E.g. Journal of Negro Education 4(January 1935), entire issue, with articles on Negro college graduates, nurses, social workers, librarians, and schoolteachers, summarized in Occupations 14(October 1935) 44-55; Occupations 14(March 1936), entire issue; Vocational Education and Guidance of Negroes, U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 38(1937); Faye Philip Everett, The Colored Situation, A Book of Vocational and Civic Guidance for the Negro Youth (Boston: Meador Publishing Co , 1936)

25. E. G. Williamson, Vocational Counseling: Some Historical, Philosophical, and Theoretical Perspectives (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965), ch. 5-7; L.L Thurstone and Charles R Mann, Vocational Guidance for College Students, Reports of Two Conferences at the National Research Council, Washington, D.C. Journal of Personnel Research 3(1925), pp 421-48 reprinted in Reprint and Circular Series of the National Research Council No. 62(1925); Mabelle Babcock Blake, Guidance for College Women, A Survey and a Program for Personnel Work in Higher Education (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1926)

26. Edward K Strong, Jr., Vocational Interests of Men and Women

(Stanford, Ca: Stanford University Press, 1943), passim, esp. pp 124-30, 162-166, 282-85, 679-80, 694-702 and 717-19. The belief is sex differences was so prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s that unisex tests (the same one for both sexes) were was apparently unthinkable.

28. Grace S. M. Zorbaugh and G. Frederic Kuder, Factors in the Vocational Choices of University Women (Chicago: University of Chicago Bookstore, [1940]).